Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

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USIA-06 PRS-01 L-03 /086 W

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: EAGR, EEC

SUBJECT: EC SCHEME FOR PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

REF: EC BRUSSELS 04756

1. WE UNDERSTAND FROM A COMMISSION SOURCE THAT THE COMMISSION HAS NOW MADE A NEW PROPOSAL IN THE SPECIAL AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE FOR A COMMON IMPORT REGIME ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES. THE PROPOSAL WOULD REQUIRE COUNCIL APPROVAL, AND WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT COUNCIL SESSION OF JUNE 23-24. IT WOULD INCLUDE THE MINIMUM IMPORT PRICE FOR PROCESSED TOMATOES, LICENSING FOR CANNED PEACHES, AND PERMISSION FOR MEMBER STATES TO MAINTAIN THEIR QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON CITRUS JUICES FOR FROM TWO TO FIVE YEARS. ALL OTHER QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS

FOR PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WOULD BE ELIMINATED. APPLICATIONS FOR LICENSES TO IMPORT CANNED PEACHES WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL WITHIN THREE DAYS AFTER SUBMISSION. LICENSES WOULD BE VALID FOR FOUR MONTHS (AN AUSTRALIAN MISSION CONTACT HAS SAID THAT THIS SHORT PERIOD OF VALIDITY WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE TROUBLESOME FOR HIS COUNTRY). AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THERE MIGHT

ALSO BE A PROVISION ALLOWING RESORT TO A MINIMUM IMPORT PRICE FOR CANNED PEACHES IF THE LICENSE SYSTEM IS NOT EFFECTIVE.

2. ACCORDING TO OUR COMMISSION SOURCE, THE SPECIAL AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE HAS REACTED FAVORABLY TO THE COMMISSION'S LATEST PROPOSAL. HOWEVER, THE ITALIANS (REFTEL) HAVE ASKED FOR A SUBSIDY FOR THEIR PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO HELP THEM COMPETE WITH THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES WHICH WILL BE RECEIVING TARIFF CONCESSIONS AND WHOSE PRODUCTION COSTS ARE LOWER. ACCORDING TO COMMISSION ESTIMATES, THIS SUBSIDIZATION WOULD COST APPROXIMATELY 3 MILLION UNITS OF ACCOUNT ANNUALLY. GREENWALD

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